

TOWN OF GAINES
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MARCH 2, 2021
TOWN HALL

Meeting called to Order at 7:00 P. M. by Chairman Watt.
Justin Kirby led the Pledge to the Flag.

Present: Christopher Watt, Chairman; Justin Kirby; Gerald Monagan; Carole Patterson; Brenda Radzinski

Guests in Attendance: Dan Strong – Town of Gaines Code Enforcement; Sherman Gittens – MRB Group; James Kirby

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes of February 2, 2021 by Justin Kirby and 2nd by Gerald Monagan.

Ayes - 5; Nays - 0

Motion Carried

OLD BUSINESS

Michael Walker application for a used car lot located at the Smith's Driving School Building at 5 corners. Michael Walker was not present at tonight's meeting and Chairman Chris Watt stated he had not heard from him since January. He mentioned the only conversation he had with the Walker's was a phone call with Mrs. Walker to review the application and find out about any updates and try to figure out what can be done with the area. Mrs. Walker was very cordial on the phone and said that she was going to discuss the conversation with her husband and get back to the board, no correspondence since then. Chairman Watt said he had received a phone call from Mr. Smith who is waiting for the board to give a yes or no answer about moving forward. Chairman Watt stated we had not heard from the Walker's therefore nothing was being done as we were waiting on updated information and was not able to give Mr. Smith an answer. Mr. Smith made it sound like something had been done as he was getting information sent to him. After the conversation with Mr. Smith, Chairman Watt realized that our attorney perhaps was talking without discussing it with the board first about this application. When Chairman Watt heard about this he was very upset about this situation and did not think it would be something the attorney would do. At this time, no action will be taken. Dan Strong added a side note to let the board know for the records, the Walkers have not been charged an application fee as nothing has been done since January. Once more information and/or updates are made the fees will then need to be processed at that time. Waiting for further action before doing anything more with the application, otherwise it may be dismissed.

2378 Gaines-Waterport Road Solar Application

Chairman Chris Watt proceeded to review where they are in the process with the application regarding the solar panel project on Gaines-Waterport Road. The representative Janet Ward was not present at tonight meeting, was not told she could not be there. At this time, no action is required as the updates were sent via (Janet Ward, DG) were received after the cut-off date, so the board is not able to do anything more until updates are taken care of. Sherman Gittens from the MRB Group also stated that he had not received any revisions or comments regarding the inquiry with the Emergency Management and he is not able to move on until this is taken care of as well.

The board and Sherman Gittens MRB Group then discussed multiple items regarding the application and where it stands now and what still needs to be done. It was mentioned there were no comments regarding the SEQR received and Chairman Watt felt it would be best to make sure all the revisions were completed, to hold off scheduling a hearing or sending application to the County. After further discussion Chairman Watt felt no action would be taken at this time, we will wait until next meeting before moving forward.

Bacon Road Project

Chairman Watt started the discussion regarding the project on Bacon Road.

Chairman Watt stated the updated documents were sent and received to the board via computer digitally on time, however, the paper copies which is what the board actually wanted arrived late. Sherman Gittens from the MRB Group stated there were no comments made from the representative Adam Winguard and updates still have to be completed before moving forward, therefore nothing more can be done at this time. The board and Sherman Gittens discussed a few items regarding the SEQR process; and what still needs to be done to keep this process moving onto the next task on the agenda. In the end, Chairman Watt and the board felt there was no action that could be taken, and further discussion will take place at the next meeting.

Pescara Solar Project

Chairman Watt moved the discussion to the Pescara Solar project, located at Gaines -Waterport Road.

The representative for this project was not present for tonight's meeting. The discussion started with Chairman Chris Watt letting the board know a digital copy of the plans were sent to him and they were very hard to read and very small. If you tried to enlarge anything, the information got really blurry, so he was not happy with those and was hoping that a paper copy would have been sent instead. Chairman Watt told the board what he was able to read was very concerning, in regard to National Grid and how the electric was going to be very overpowering. He asked Sherman Gittens from the MRB Group to see if he would be able to look into finding a better solution for this process. Sherman stated he would go straight to the applicant and discuss this concern and try to find other options to correct this situation. The board and Sherman Gittens also discussed a few other concerns that they had, as Chairman Watt is seeing a lot of red flags. Some of these discussions were in regard to what would happen if the company is not able to finish project in timely manner (or sell to another rep to finish). Decommission is also a concern with this project, we want no surprises at the last minute. Sherman Gittens stated he was going to work with both our Board and the Town of Carlton Board and try to figure out what can be done with this project to move it forward. Sherman Gittens also mentioned the Town of Carlton now has a problem with our board being the lead agency for the SEQR process; felt that the board should think about it and figure what would be best. One other concern was regarding the Special Use Permit, Chairman Watt questioned how this would be used in this type of Project. Dan Strong looked up the laws and read them aloud to the board so they could figure out what would work best; the number of years the project is being used; and what may be needed on the legal side of things; more discussions will be needed. There are many issues that need to be fixed before the project can move forward and the board will also need to wait to see what the Town of Carlton plans on doing as well before continuing. There will be more discussion to come at next month's meeting. No Action needed at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Watt stated that there was one new concern that needed to be figured out. Once these solar projects are ready to go for a public hearing the board is going to need to find a spot that will be big enough to hold all who want to attend and still comply with the COVID requirements. This other location will also have to get expense approval from the town. A few options that were mentioned was the school, but was not sure that would work, concerned that the school would not want to have to deal with this and then contract tracing if someone got sick. A church was also mentioned, but again would not probably work. Another option mentioned was doing the hearing via Zoom. This would work; however, Sherman Gittens made a few comments regarding this. He was concerned about the legal side of the Zoom hearing. There could be a lot of issues using this, such as people not being able to hear, being able to attend, etc, so Zoom may not be the best option. One other option that was mentioned was the Carlton Rec Hall, this option seemed like the best option, but more discussion will need to be made. No action at this time.

No further business.

AJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:10 P. M. by 1st by Carole Patterson, 2nd by Brenda Radzinski.

Ayes - 5; Nays - 0

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Bradshaw, Secretary

